

"I am here because of the report sent by the Bush administration to the United Nations, as required by the Kyoto Protocol.

Through that treaty, the US committed to voluntarily stabilize emissions at 1990 levels by the year 2012.

Now that the Bush administration has acknowledged what our own National Academy of Sciences has said, we must act.

Adapt.

They tell us adapting to a changing climate is inevitable.

I, for one, do not think adaptation alone is an acceptable response for the US - and even less for the rest of the world.

How could a highly susceptible country like Bangladesh adapt - a country of over a hundred million people?

This is a lowland country with over 360 miles of coastline, vulnerable to monsoons and flooding.

I ask our President, how can Bangladesh adapt? And there are dozens of other countries in the world that are equally vulnerable.

In addition to adaptation, the Bush administration has unveiled a "do nothing and do nothing" policy.

The fossil fuel producers have no intention of voluntarily reducing the use of fuels, which is the only way to reduce emissions.

Meanwhile, this week Japan joined the 15-member European Union and ratified the Kyoto Protocol.

The Protocol will very likely take effect before the end of this year.

The United States must regain its leadership role in dealing with the most critical environmental issue of our time.

I join my colleagues and call on the President to support a meaningful plan to address climate change.

Let us at least meet the goals set forth by President George Herbert Walker Bush, in his 1990 State of the Union address.

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